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**From:** Gillian Cook [oddbits@rcn.com]  
**Sent:** Monday, February 23, 2009 4:27 PM  
**To:** Williams, Catrice (DTC)  
**Subject:** Proposed Regional Service Quality Investigation  
**Attachments:** Years of problems with Verizon

Dear Ms. Williams,

I am resending my original email as I did not know we were supposed to have a specific reference in the subject line.

Having just read the formal Request for Comment I would like to answer the three questions you pose as follows:

1. Based on my experience over many years (and that of friends and neighbors throughout Leverett, Mass.) I believe there is reasonable basis to conclude there is a widespread problem with Verizon services in the western counties. Many of us have endured repeated problems with our phone service including buzzing, crackling, and hissing on the line---especially during wet weather---that can make it difficult to impossible to hear callers or be heard by them, and service outages (most recently I lost all service on my primary line from 12/31/08 to 1/5/09). Also, every repair person who has come out over the years, as well as Verizon operators (and even managers) have acknowledged that our line is old and our repeated problems can only be alleviated by replacement of the line. I also know that the repair people who repeatedly service our area have asked Verizon managers on a number of occasions to put money into the area to make the necessary repairs and/or to replace lines and have been ignored. This is particularly galling given that Verizon has been given money (taxpayer dollars) so that they can provide infrastructure in towns like ours to enable high speed Internet access. Using this money to replace existing lines with fiber optic ones would solve both the phone and Internet issues AT NO COST to Verizon. They are, however, using the money in the eastern part of the state where they can make a profit.
2. I think a regional investigation would be cost effective and also serve to highlight how widespread the issue of poor quality service is and how recalcitrant Verizon has been about addressing it. They have a monopoly in the western counties; many towns like ours cannot get cable, wireless is an issue due to prohibitions on cell towers (an issue Leverett is going to address), and due to the rural nature of the region satellite dishes are often not an option. Verizon has therefore adopted the attitude that it can basically ignore our complaints and still not lose customers.
3. I think the CTT should not only consolidate the town-specific investigations, but allow other towns considering making formal complaintsto do so and then include them.

Gillian Cook